

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

"And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch"

Mark 13:37

NEWSLETTER

February 2012

To all Christian Watch Members

Dear Friends,

Another month has passed, in which we have received many God-given mercies, and we are able to communicate with you again. What an infinite favour it is that we have a kind and gracious Lord God to go to with our many cares and concerns; and One who has never dealt with us as our sins deserve. When we consider the Lord's goodness and mercy to us having been given, we trust, a little understanding of what the dear Lord Jesus endured to pay the ransomed price to atone for His people's sins, how we should endeavour to praise Him and glorify His great and Holy Name. In addition, we must also be mindful of the willingness of the Holy Father to send His beloved Son to be a sacrifice to redeem His elect people that they should one day join with the glorious hosts in Heaven in praise and thanksgiving for ever. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples and to all true believers who love and follow Him, *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."* John 14 v 1 & 2.

The affairs, and so called pleasures of this increasingly evil and sinful world, no longer hold the attractions they did when we were content with them. In much mercy, the Lord is able to wean us from a desire for worldly pleasures and the promotion of one's self to gratify our pride. If the lines of the hymn by the late Samuel Medley, "I could from all things parted be, But never, never Lord from thee" are truly the fervent desires of our heart, we believe we shall go to be with the redeemed in Heaven when we die.

Whilst our lives are spared, we have a God-given responsibility to witness our profession and publicly manifest who we endeavour to serve. One historic method used by armies to identify themselves was to raise a banner. We include an article by our National Co-ordinator, Michael Hobbs, entitled, **A Banner Unfurled**. I wonder how many of us, having read this article, can say we fulfil our responsibility in publicly displaying the banner we trust the Lord has given us, to His honour and glory.

A further article by Michael Hobbs is included under the title, **'Who is on the Lord's side?' ('FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS')**. It includes an update for January and February on the campaign he is presently undertaking. We are thankful for the support and personal involvement of a number of our Members in the areas Michael has presently covered. This has allowed the formation of a number of local groups who will be able to display their banner and be active in contending for the Word of God against the many evils that abound in our nation and in society today. May the Lord bless all who are willing and prepared to raise and display the banner of His Holy Word.

It is a sad reflection on the Christian community in the United Kingdom, and more particularly on Protestants, when a Muslim woman has to call for them to take pride in their religious roots and to play a greater role in public life. It has been reported in the news media that this point was made when the Cabinet Minister, Baroness Warsi, led a delegation of seven Government Ministers to Rome to be received by the Pope. In addition to this, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, was reported in the Daily Mail on 16th February as warning Christians in Britain that they should be prepared to fight and even to die for their religion in a bid to reverse the tide of secularisation. He referred to the increasing discrimination in the law courts against Christians as a result of political correctness and the equality laws. He also expressed the urgent need for Christians to stand up for themselves as the Anglicans do in Africa. Lord Carey said it is up to us to do something and to warn the people that they must get over the attitude of saying they can do nothing about it, as we are living in a post-Christian age. He also said he blamed Tony Blair and David Cameron for paying lip service to Christianity whilst pushing Britain down the path of civil partnerships and gay marriage.

As we have previously stated, we are all required by the Lord to fulfil the responsibilities He has clearly placed upon us. It is a sad reflection upon our religious profession if we ignore or neglect to do them. We include a further article in the series by Andy Clarke, entitled **Christian Responsibilities**, in which he deals with them as it concerns both local and national issues. Many points are made upon which we can examine our personal conduct and performance. The solemnity of the present times cannot be over-emphasised and the responsibility placed upon us increases continually as Satan and his agents progressively achieve their aim to completely undermine our Christian faith and the blessings the Lord has favoured us with over so many years.

We sincerely hope the article we include by Rev. James Tallach entitled **A Precious Promise** will be a comfort and encouragement to all our Members. It is an infinite mercy and blessing if we are among that number to whom such a promise applies. The text in Romans 8 v 28 is quoted and, if we have faith to believe in its application to us personally, then we have nothing to fear, whatever may overtake us in this wilderness journey.

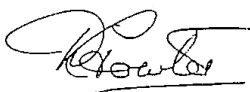
You will recall that in our January Newsletter we included a report on HM Queen Elizabeth's Christmas Broadcast and we advised that we would write to her. This we did and we include the response we have received from Her Majesty's Lady-in-Waiting. We are thankful that Her Majesty has more recently expressed her support for the Christian faith. May it please the Lord to answer many prayers that she may be abundantly blessed and prepared for entrance into the everlasting Kingdom above, when she is called to leave this present world.

We were sent a DVD from a Mr. C.J. Bowers, who lives in the United States of America, having been advised by a friend of its exceptional significance, in that it traces and identifies the reasons for the rapid decline in morality, honesty and integrity in the USA. Having seen the DVD, we were amazed how accurately it identified and dealt with the same solemn issues that we are facing in the United Kingdom. For example, the destruction of family life and endeavouring to change the definition of marriage; the promotion of homosexuality in schools; allowing children and young people to watch pornography on television, etc. Because of this, we contacted Mr. Bowers and requested to purchase a quantity of the DVDs to enable us to make them available to our Members. We are pleased we can now supply these and details of price etc. are included under the title of '**Agenda**' **DVD**.

May the Lord appear for us to stem the ever-increasing tide of evil and wickedness now so prevalent in our once-favoured country, as well as in other lands where the Word of God was established as the foundation for Government and the rule of law. Prayer is the greatest weapon we have and may that same wrestling prayer be given to us as was granted to Jacob of old, when he said to the Lord, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Genesis 32 v 24-29.

We pray the Lord will bless each of our Members with all they need for time and eternity.

Yours, in the Lord's service.



David Crowter

Management Committee

Mr. D Boyd; Mr M Brockes (Hon Treasurer/Co Secretary); Mr D Crowter (Chairman);
Mr I Henderson; Mr M Hobbis; Mr D Lawson; Mr M De Semlyen; Mr P Baker;
Mrs J Cummins (Secretary).

A Banner Unfurled

Michael Hobbis - National Co-ordinator

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.” Psalm 60: 4.

Banners, standards and ensigns, are given to armies by their commanders as a central point around which the troops may rally and be encouraged.

A banner is furled when there is no battle, or when the army is beaten, or has capitulated in abject surrender; so too when the banner is captured; defeat is usually not far away.

Whatever the state of the battle, the army always endeavours to keep its banner aloft and unfurled unto the very end. If the standard-bearer is killed, then another takes his place, for it is a sign that the battle is still being fought and that they are a force to be reckoned with.

Moreover the banner unfurled signifies in whose name and for which cause the battle is raging. Worldly battles may be fought under despotic and wicked rulers; while opposing armies under their own banners fight against these tyrants.

In the Scripture set before us we are told that a banner has been given. It tells us by whom it has been given; to whom it has been given; the reason for it being given; and the purpose for it being so given.

The One who gives the banner

We are told firstly that it has been given by God, One who is holy, just and good in all His works. We may never have any fear that this Captain will leave His sinking ship, or as Commander desert the field of battle, for not only is the King of Kings Almighty; but faithful and changes not.

The One in whose hand is the breath of every living thing is also the shield and defender of the saints. He has already defeated Satan and all his hosts of Hell and God's soldiers now face a weakened and defeated enemy. A foe that may indeed do them some physical harm through his servants, but Apollyon can never finally overcome them, for their Saviour has conquered death and the devil, so they need not fear to die on the field of battle as martyrs. This is the One who gave His own life blood to pay the ransom for their eternal souls, that they may fight as those who can never truly die.

King Jesus passes this banner to them that they might be identified as true Christian soldiers in their fight against the world, the flesh and the devil.

To whom it is given

This banner is not given to all men, but only to those who have been enlisted in the army of their God and King. The proof of their enlistment is that they wear the mark of this King: viz. they fear the Lord. They fear His name and exercise the love they have towards Him, not only for His compassion and kindness; but they also meditate upon His power and majesty and admire His beauty, and worship Him in the beauty of His love and holiness. Therefore we who truly love Him in Christ Jesus also truly reverence and fear Him in His omnipotent might. These who are given the banner of God are the

saved ones, purchased not with the sacrificial blood of beasts: but with the precious blood of their God incarnate.

We carry the banner unfurled not merely out of a sense of duty alone as a slave – but out of an undying gratitude for His forbearance, love and mercy, and for who He is: Creator of heaven, earth and the sea, and all that is in them.

Nelson as Admiral before the battle of Trafalgar sent the famous message: *‘England expects every man to do his duty’*.

How much more should the blood-bought children of God carry aloft the standard of their Captain loyal and true; even our Immanuel.

The reason for this banner being so given

If the army went out to battle, yet out of shame kept the standard furled and hidden, or worse changed it for another: then to what ensign would the troops rally. It is to be unfurled or as the Scripture says: displayed, that all men may see its message and that there should be a rallying cry around it; indeed such should be its influence upon us that we may say that we cannot but speak of the things we have seen and heard, and take up our banner right loyally.

And what a gift this banner is; it has been passed down to us by successive generations of faithful worthies: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and that great army of the Church of faith; for time would fail us to tell of the number of these saints and the many martyrs who faithfully kept this standard aloft and stained it with their own blood, and we look to Jesus who Himself was crucified for our sin, that this banner should be passed to us.

If, Heaven forbid, we should be ashamed of this banner we shall justly merit that judgment pronounced by our Lord Jesus when He said: “If any man be ashamed of me and My words (*His banner*); of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh with His angels in glory.” Let us stand loyally under His banner and cry to others to join us.

The purpose for which it is to be displayed

“Because of the truth. Selah”

Let us pause here as the Scripture “Selah” would seem to indicate; and consider solemnly that it is possible to have this banner and yet not display it. Why is it to be displayed? – Because of the truth.

It is sad to recall that many who, through tradition, hold to the Bible authorised by King James, yet keep the banner of Jesus furled. Indeed, there are regimental museums where the old blood-stained standards of this world’s armies are kept; these are cherished, yet never held aloft any more.

There are many today in dead orthodoxy who admire the ‘old Bible’ and the lives of the puritans, but whose lives are diametrically opposed to the real religion of these godly saints. Even the atheists, Richard Dawkins the scientist and Melvin Bragg the broadcaster, both express their admiration and preference for this King James Bible, yet are rejecters of the truth it contains!

We are not to keep this precious vessel of truth confined to museums, or merely admired in Bible exhibitions; but to remember that this is a living Book, through which

the Living God still speaks to His saints and is as relevant today as it was when it first came off the presses in 1611.

This standard of God is to be held aloft by those who love and believe the truth. We must stand by this Holy Book of God's oracles and defend its truth unto death. Rather than let a word go, we should be like Tyndale that faithful translator of God's Word who said of that work of translating: *'I have never altered a single syllable of the Word of God against my conscience.'* We are to display our standard to all men because of its truth. By this truth we are re-born; by this truth we come to faith in Jesus; by this truth we are sanctified and by this truth called from our graves in resurrection power.

A Banner Unfurled

*A banner unfurled we carry to fight,
A standard provided by God.
An ensign of truth to the way that is right,
And stained by the saints with their blood.*

*My Lord is the One who gave it to thee,
And now you must hold it aloft.
Held high in the crowd, that all men may see
The salvation He bought at such cost.*

*A banner unfurled from a Saviour above,
Is for those who fear Him aright.
For those whom He saved in measureless love.
For those who now walk in the light.*

*It must be displayed; not hidden away,
Nor kept in museums of night.
It's given to you, to me, and to thee,
That sin may be driven to flight.*

*And what else does it say: this banner of love,
This ensign to truth and to right?
It carries the Word from the Father above:
O who will stand with us and fight?*

(A personal footnote – After a recent quiet time with the Lord, the words: 'a banner unfurled' kept passing through my mind. Sure that they must be located somewhere in the Scriptures, I searched for them through a concordance. Of course I did not find them; but found the spirit of them in the above verse in Psalm 60:4.)

We need workers loyal and faithful to this Word to call men back to the old paths, and cry: with our banner unfurled - 'Stand ye in the ways (*the old paths*) and see!' Jeremiah 6: 16.

Join us now and let us hold aloft together our banner. In the opening chapters of Numbers we read that each tribe of Israel had their own standard. Now in Christ Jesus we are all one; Jew and Gentile; male and female; under the same banner.

Who is on the Lord's side? Let him stand with us now.

There are various ways by which the people of God might support this work and take a stand with us.

1. By lifting up this work in prayer to God, that the Word may go forth and have free course and the Saviour glorified.
 2. With much needed financial support.
 3. By active participation in local groups by joining with them, or as group leaders.
- Would those who feel so led to a closer involvement, please contact me below:

Michael Hobbis

email: mjhobbis@christianwatch.net
or by mobile on 07702 431584

Agenda DVD

This DVD contains an important message with regard to the pattern of events in the USA since the 1950s - which are precisely the same as those being experienced in the UK. In addition, the cause of the rapid deterioration in both countries can be clearly identified as a departure from the Biblical standards by which both nations were previously blessed with real prosperity. This departure we continue to witness by the breakdown in family order, the number of illegitimate births, the promotion of homosexuality, together with many other aspects of our national life.

The 'AGENDA' DVD not only provides numerous examples of our national rejection of the commandments of God, but also identifies the various influences, including both political and false religions, which the devil is using to break down society, to promote evil and wickedness and to destroy that which, in God's order, has been the means of our national prosperity.

We consider the 'AGENDA' DVD carries a very important message by clearly identifying the solemn pattern of events in the USA, which are being mirrored in the UK and many other countries. In order to spread this message, we requested, and have been appointed, distributors of the DVD in the UK. We can, therefore, now offer this important DVD to our Members at the following prices which **include post & packing**:

1 - 3 copies -	£10.00 each
4 - 9 -	£8.50 each
Over 10 -	£7.50 each

Available from:

CHRISTIAN WATCH (Resources), PO Box 3268, Leamington Spa, CV32 6YA
Email: jean@christianwatch.net

‘Who is on the Lord’s side?’

Campaign news for January/February, 2012

Michael Hobbis, National Co-ordinator

‘FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS’

The campaign in the Sussex area at Chichester and Horsham has resulted in new members joining with us, with two of them as group leaders forming with others a new contact group. Their first members’ meeting is to be held at the Girl Guide Headquarters building in Denne Road, Horsham on the 31st of March at 7pm, God willing. Please do turn out and support them there, if you are able to. *

At the last survey conducted in Horsham as to religious belief, Horsham was well above the average for professing a belief in God and Heaven (about 76%), whereas in the general population it was around 71%. Yet how many there are today who profess a belief in God and promise themselves peace: where there is no peace. Christian Watch is **for such a time as this**.

The campaign is now moving on to Wiltshire in Southern England and Devon and Cornwall in the South West. I recently manned a stand for Christian Watch with my wife at the Exeter Christian Resources Exhibition (CRE). Although many of the exhibitors promote a very worldly Christian message; and some even a false one; yet a few others were there who faithfully proclaimed the old paths, of the old Gospel, by the old Bible - which things are not really antiquarian at all, as some think, but are still as fresh and relevant today as they have always been.

Many came to the stand where we displayed posters on the wall depicting the martyrs, and with an old *Foxes Book of Martyrs* on a table which many looked at; with one lady being thrilled to find a distant ancestor from Lewes (James Morris) listed in *Foxes*. On the other side of the stand was a pictorial history of the Reformation, while at the front was a large campaign banner asking ‘Who is On the Lord’s Side?’ A brother from the nearby stand of *The Society for Promoting the Hebrew Scriptures* said how affected he was by the words from Exodus 32:26 on the banner.

Much literature on the work of Christian Watch was taken, with many people expressing an appreciation for our presence and our stand against the tide of liberalism and immorality within the churches. New members were added; but what surprised me most of all were those obviously born again faithful souls who came to the stand for conversations who said how encouraged they were by our witness and yet found themselves still remaining in congregations where the Gospel had long ago become a social one, or that the Minister had lost his way. These folk felt that because of long association or family connections with the church that they felt unwilling to move on. It is these who most of all need the help and encouragement that Christian Watch contact groups can offer at **such a time as this**. Some would like to be active in standing up for the Lord in this generation, and it is so important that such zealous, if isolated, believers are given opportunities in the local groups.

Despite the pseudo ‘Christian’ razzamatazz around us at CRE Exeter, it was a very useful and profitable time with new contacts now forged in the South West. It is hoped that contact groups for Devon and Cornwall will, by the grace of God, be set up soon.

To this end I spoke to a Minister’s Fraternal in Honiton on the 16th of January where arrangements were made to visit congregations; and I later spoke to the believers at John Flavel’s old church at Galmpton, Devon where Colin Thompson and other faithful

elders care for the folk there. I was able to give a word on the importance of keeping to the AV and the dangers of the loss of the authoritative voice of God through versionism, which was well received, and a generous donation given. Other churches such as Tavistock Free Presbyterian Church have been visited and much help and encouragement from a dear brother, Pastor David Kay of Barnstaple - Whiddon Valley Evangelical Church.

Several Devonians who are not yet members have expressed a strong interest in the work and I am hoping to recruit these and work with them very soon.

We all now live in a society in a state of flux, with demonstrations against the austerity measures adopted by Governments; moral decay in uprightness and honesty; sexual perversion in churches; and promiscuity in schools and universities, aided and abetted by much of the media; and anarchy seems just around the corner.

Furthermore, the true Christian religion has in many churches not so much declined, but has metamorphosed into a completely new form, and as Exhibitions such as CRE demonstrate, so many professing Christians owe their mode of worship and belief to the influence of the popular culture of the world of men, rather than the Holy Ghost.

If ever a work like Christian Watch needs to be found fearless and faithful in godly zeal it is at **such a time as this**; only the God of Daniel can arm us for the fight. Only the quickening power of the Holy Spirit will enable us to be valiant for truth in the earth – optimism or enthusiasm will not sustain us. Even this campaign or prayers for revival will not help us, unless we grasp by faith the vision of the City of God where our Redeemer, the Lamb, is the Light thereof, and see the miserable vanity of the temporary pleasures of this world.

Many – including myself - complain of *apathy* among believers in the churches. Yet can it be otherwise when we grieve His Spirit by corrupting the Oracles of God in our foolish man-made ‘bibles’ and live for television shows? There are even ‘reformed Christians’ who now consider they have the liberty to do their supermarket shopping on the Lord’s Day and play the ‘lottery’. Brethren, such things ought not so to be.

I believe that many will soon be leaving the established church due to various issues, and Christian Watch members filled with the Holy Spirit can offer a rallying point for these with a call to return to the ‘Old Paths’, as we stand under the Lord’s banner and offer sound fellowship to them.

Other developments in the campaign have been - a very blessed time speaking to the believers at the church where Thomas Yates is the pastor at Hope Chapel, Hazelmere; and at the Emmanuel Reformed Church, Salisbury where the Reverend Malcolm Watts is the Minister.

Please do pray earnestly for a blessing upon this campaign and much needed grace as we recall His great mercy, longsuffering and goodness to us – For He is faithful that promised.

Again, do contact me if you are able to help in forming a contact group in your own area.

Michael - 07702 431 584 email: mjhobbis@christianwatch.net

*In order that there is connectivity between members; as new contacts groups are formed it has been suggested that the various groups send in news from their area for the new website which is in the process of re-construction.

Christian Responsibilities

Part 7 – Local and National Responsibilities

As with previous articles this part is more an appeal and exhortation than a doctrinal discourse.

All around us we witness the withdrawing of God's hand in judgment. In fact, so widespread are the challenges we face it can prove discouraging and disheartening to know what to do first. How often I have lamented "It can't possibly get any worse" – but sadly it does.

We live in a society more and more like the days of Noah - an age where all restraint is being withdrawn and wickedness openly encouraged. Conduct and behaviour unimaginable only twenty or thirty years ago is now common place and often actively encouraged. Sexual perversion is corrupting our children's minds and parading openly in the streets with 'pride'. The very state instituted by God Almighty to be 'the sword of justice' is effectively aiding and abetting criminal behaviour in encouraging and assisting children to participate in under-age sex. Levels of suicide, sexually transmitted diseases, abortions, violence, drug and alcohol use, rape and even murder amongst young people continues to grow. This moral decline and social breakdown is indiscriminate, affecting every level and strata of society.

Why?

The Apostle Paul taught that the Old Testament Scriptures were "*written for our learning*" (Rom. 15:4). Yet it seems the people of God today foolishly pay little attention to the numerous examples of God's judgment on the nation of Israel, thinking it has little or no bearing on us in Britain today.

"... The LORD is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you". (Emphasis mine) 2 Chron. 15:2.

There is no escaping it. God blesses obedience and judges disobedience.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:" (Emphasis mine). Deut. 30:19.

Scripture is literally full of such warnings from the Lord, not to the heathen, but to **His people**. Yet we live in a country blessed of God that has had its rich Christian heritage and constitution systematically uprooted and dismantled before our eyes with little apparent concern from the people of God. We have great multitudes that have heard and know nothing of the things of God. People lost and without hope. When all are in such great need of certainty in these volatile and unpredictable times, the very people who know the ONE and ONLY answer – that is the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ – are silent.

Why is the church so passive and inactive? It seems hard to fathom when the Scriptures are so clear. The Scriptures instruct us to '*go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*' (Mark:16:15) '*reprove, rebuke exhort*' (2 Tim. 4:2, Tit. 2:15, Prov. 24:25, 27:5, 28:3, Neh. 5:7, Acts 2:40, Luke 17:3) '*contend*' (Neh. 13:11,17,25, Jude 1:3) '*stand in defence of the Gospel*' (Phil. 1:17) and '*be witnesses and ambassadors*' (John 1:15, Acts 1:8,22, 4:33, 10:39, 13:31, 22:15, 26:22) for the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

None of these exhortations and commands can be faithfully achieved if Christians stay silent and inactive. How can you "*make known the mystery of the gospel*" if silent? How can anyone know of the wrath to come – lest he be warned? How can anyone contend, rebuke, exhort etc. unless they speak? How can you "*be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*" (1 Peter 3:15) – if you are mute?

Powerless Christians

I fear that our ease and comfort has probably dulled our zeal making us “luke-warm” Christians; preferring to “pass by on the other side”, leaving the spiritual warfare to others. In effect, we have become powerless because we have sought “influence” with the world rather than Holy obedience before God. We have made ‘worldly ways and means’ our weapon of choice rather than the armour of God and the ‘*sword of the spirit*’ (Eph. 6:11-17). We appear to have allowed the devil to distract us and take us away from seeking His righteousness FIRST. It seems, despite all our modern conveniences and “time saving” devices, that almost EVERYBODY is ALWAYS “too busy”. But busy doing what - we need to ask?

- Passively watching television full of blasphemy, explicit sex, and gratuitous violence?
- Playing violent and addictive computer games?
- Obsessed with watching or playing sport?
- Mindlessly “surfing the web” or “chatting” on internet social websites?
- Working “all the hours God sends”, thereby neglecting God and family in pursuit of “success” and needless possessions?

You know we are damned as a nation when there appears little difference between the people of God and the world! “*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*” James 4:4 (Emphasis mine).

My Exhortation

Dear reader, you have responsibilities to fulfil and duties to perform starting with where you live and worship. The Biblical command to ‘go’ always starts right where you are - your own heart, home, street and community. “*No man has a right to be idle*”, wrote William Wilberforce. He challenged his contemporaries to use their “*health, leisure and affluence*” to “*find some ignorance to instruct, some wrong to redress, some want to supply, some misery to alleviate.*” My friends, Wilberforce is right. We are duty bound to be *active*. We are no longer our own, but servants to another, bought at the price of no less than the precious blood of the Son of God. As saints of God it is not a matter of choice, or convenience, whether we are active in the Lord’s cause - but a COMMAND of God Almighty.

You likewise have a national duty. The Scripture commands - and exhortations previously mentioned - do not just apply to individuals and those in your local communities, but also to the ‘nobles’ and ‘rulers’ and ‘Kings’. Look at the example of Nehemiah in his exhortation to the nobles and rulers of Jerusalem to ‘rise and build’ the wall to remove the reproach upon God’s Name (Neh. 2:16-18). Look how he exhorted and encouraged the building and defence of the walls of Jerusalem (Chapters 3,4,6). Consider his rebuke and reproof of the nobles and rulers in Chapter five and the religious authorities in Chapter 13. He didn’t just write a letter, send an email, sign a petition or leave it to someone else to do or go away and ‘think about it’. He often acted *promptly, personally and directly*. We see this when Nehemiah personally cast Tobiah from “*a chamber in the courts of the house God*” (Neh. 13:7,8). This is what is needed, dear reader – **prompt, personal, direct action**.

Letters, emails, petitions etc., have their place, but I believe there probably would be no need for them at all if every local congregation of the Lord’s people was more active as witnesses, ambassadors and contenders for the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in their own LOCAL communities. We may not be able to change the world through our own efforts, but with the Lord’s help, we can certainly try in our own homes, street and community! **This is the great need of our day** - prayerful – local – action.

Yours in Christ,

Andy Clarke

“*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*” James 4:17

A Precious Promise

By

Rev. James A. Tallach

How rich is **promise** in the inheritance of every believer! Even in this life he possesses riches of grace from which he may draw much present joy and comfort, but by far the greater part of his inheritance is held for him in promise, and is received by him in faith. "Faith," we are told, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." One of the most wonderful of these promises, and one that is perhaps most often quoted, is that in Romans 8 verse 28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." The range of this promise is very wide, embracing as it does "all things," and under the all-wise and all-powerful control of God, the promise operates with a certainty which never fails to result in the highest good to those concerned. Nevertheless, to many of these "all things" there is a very real difficulty. That all **good** things work together for good they are disposed to believe, but in the stern facts of life in this world many things operate which are not good; as, for instance, sickness, disease, accident, grief, death, bereavement. When the "**all things**" of the promise include such things, how can we persuade ourselves that **they** work together for good? And yet there it is written in the Word of Eternal Truth, "All things work together for good to them that love God," and the Apostle is so assured on the matter that he says, "We know."

No doubt, in the case of many, much of the difficulty arises from their giving a carnal interpretation to the "goodness" promised here. Even the true believer may confound worldly, carnal good with spiritual and heavenly good. In so far as he does so he cannot fail to get into difficulties with this promise and to lose much of its comfort and sweetness. Let us then, in a very brief way, consider the nature of the "goodness" here promised; it may help.

(a) The "good" here promised is undoubtedly **spiritual** good and not worldly good, that goodness which consists in the deliverance of the soul from sin. The salvation of the soul from the dominion, guilt and bitter fruits of sin is the Scriptural ideal of all good, and it is in the originating, the promoting and the realising of this good that all things work together. In the process of salvation from sin the soul of a sinner is as gold in which there is much dross; as fire is one of the chief things necessary to purge the dross and purify the gold so the fires of pain, sorrow, trial, need, are among the "all things" which work together to ensure the saving of the soul. "Now no chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." Due regard to this will go a long way in resolving the difficulty indicated. Further,

(b) The goodness here promised is **eternal** good, not temporal good. How easily and often mistaken we are in this: we judge goodness according to the present transient effect upon our lives, but that is the world's estimate of good - as they say - **good** fortune, a **good** time, a **pleasant** evening, **good** company. When the evening is past, when the time is spent, when the company is dispersed, when finally death comes, where then is the goodness, and how much of it is left? "The laughter of fools is as the crackling of thorns under a pot" - a great deal of noise, an intense flame, a momentary blaze of light - then blackness and ashes. The goodness designed by the Redeemer for his redeemed is of quite another quality - it is that substantial and enduring goodness inherent in "Life that shall never end." In attempting to look into the future,

even with the enlightenment of faith and Scripture, our vision still is but as a looking through a glass darkly; and how restricted our view must be! But the Lord is not restricted, His view takes in the whole extent of our future requirements in this world; it takes within its range the Great Day of Judgment, and an endless eternity – an eternity of torment to be delivered from, and an eternity of glory to be prepared for; it takes into account the body of sin and death which is still to be destroyed, and the perfection of holiness yet to be realised in order to “the enjoying of God to all eternity”; and with all this in view He so orders and so controls all things that they work together in the production of a goodness fully adequate to meet all demands and to abide forever. To this view the Apostle refers when he says, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

(c) No doubt the good promised is also a **holy, sanctified, gracious goodness**. It is a quality of holiness which secures the happiness of the gracious soul – apart from it there can be no true good. It is such a goodness as has in it, in some measure at least, a holy and willing obedience to the Master’s will. In this Jesus himself provides an example which should never fail to call forth our deepest wonder and admiration, “Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered,” and “For it became Him for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” This discipline of learning obedience, this writing of the Law of the Covenant upon the heart, this “Oh, how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day,” becomes a mark of sonship, a necessary and very precious mark; a mark, moreover, which shows our kinship with the **Son** and with the **Captain of Salvation**; could there be greater good than this? Who would quarrel with those things – **any** of these “all things” – which in the Lord’s mercy and wisdom work together to produce that highest form of all good which consists in conformity to the image of Jesus? Is this not the fulfilment of all gracious desire, and the answer to all true prayer? And is it not to this highest of all possible good that those who love God are predestinated? “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, **He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.”

Reminder.....

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A REMARKABLE ACCOUNT AND EXAMPLE

After the hymn, before the sermon, the Church's Pastor slowly stood up and walked over to the pulpit. Before commencing his sermon, however, he briefly introduced a guest Minister who was in the Church that evening. In his introduction, the Pastor told the congregation that the guest Minister was one of his dearest childhood friends and that he wanted him to say a few words to greet the Church and share whatever he felt would be appropriate for the service.

The elderly man stepped into the pulpit and began to speak as follows:

"A father, his son and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast," he began, "when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized."

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers, who for the first time since the service began, were looking interested in his story. The aged Minister continued.

"Grabbing the rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life: to which boy should he throw the other end of the life line? He only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew his son was a Christian and also knew that his son's friend was not. The agony of the decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father yelled out, 'I love you my son', he threw out the lifeline to his son's friend. By that time his son had disappeared beneath the raging swelling waves into the black of night. His body was never recovered."

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting up straight in their pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old Minister's mouth.

"The father," he continued, "believed his son would step into eternity with Jesus, and he could not bear the thought of his son's friend entering into eternity without Jesus. He therefore sacrificed his son to save the son's friend. How great is the love of God that He should do the same for sinners," he said. "The Heavenly Father sacrificed His only begotten Son to save rebellious sinners." With that, the old man sat back in his chair as silence filled the Church.

The Pastor again walked slowly to the pulpit and delivered a brief sermon. After the service ended, the two teenagers went to the old man, and said politely, "That was a nice story but not very realistic for a father to give up his son's life in the hope that the other boy would become a Christian."

"Well, you have a point there," the old man replied, glancing down at his well-worn Bible. A big smile then broadened his narrow face as he once again looked up at the boys and said, "It certainly isn't very realistic, is it? But I am standing here today to tell you that that story gives me just a glimpse of what it must have been like for God the Father to give His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for a sinner like me. And, also you see, I was the actual father and your Pastor was my son's friend."



SANDRINGHAM HOUSE

26th January 2012

Dear Mr Crowter,

The Queen wishes me to write and thank you and your fellow members of Christian Watch for your letter.

Her Majesty was pleased to hear that you enjoyed her Christmas broadcast and greatly appreciated the kind supportive comments which you have made.

I am to thank you again, most sincerely, for the assurance of your prayers for Her Majesty and her family, and for your continuing loyalty and support.

*Yours sincerely,
Richenda Elton*

Lady-in-Waiting

Mr D Crowter

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Published by:

CHRISTIAN WATCH, PO Box 2113, Nuneaton, CV11 6ZY.

Email: info@christianwatch.net **Web:** www.christianwatch.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1095108